

- Bi-Partisan Energy Bill Will Include Increased Fuel Economy Standards, National Renewable Energy Standard, Commitment to Homegrown Biofuels -

Washington, DC – As Congress is poised to pass its major comprehensive energy legislation, U.S. Rep. John Hall (D-NY19) claimed victory on the inclusion of several groundbreaking "green" energy initiatives that he has been working on since coming to Congress.

"The House is about to pass a groundbreaking, bi-partisan energy bill that will change America's energy policy to reduce dependence on foreign oil and begin to fight global warming," said Hall, a member of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. "I'm proud that it will include major changes I've been pushing for that will reduce our dependence on foreign oil, lower power and gas prices, cut carbon emissions and greatly expand the use of renewable sources of energy."

Hall has been an environmental activist and an advocate for clean, renewable energy since the late 1970s, when he co-founded the group Musicians United for Safe Energy (MUSE).

Tomorrow, the House is expected to pass the final House-Senate agreement on the Energy Independence and Security Act. This agreement with the Senate builds on the energy bills passed by the House this summer. The Senate is expected to consider the legislation later this month.

Several key measures that were strongly supported by Congressman Hall, and which were the subject of in-depth negotiations between the House and Senate on, have made it into the compromise bill, including:

Historic Fuel Economy Standards for Cars and Trucks

The energy bill contains a provision to increase fuel economy standards (CAFE standards) to 35 miles per gallon by 2020 for new cars and trucks. These provisions will save American families \$700 to \$1000 per year at the pump, with \$22 billion in net consumer savings in 2020 alone. This is the first increase in fuel economy standards by Congress since 1975. This measure will reduce oil consumption by 1.1 million gallons per day in 2020 (one-half of what is currently imported from the Persian Gulf), and reduce greenhouse gases equal to taking 28 million of today's average cars and trucks off the road.

Congressman Hall has repeatedly fought for increased CAFE standards since coming to Congress in January. He is a cosponsor of H.R. 1506, the Fuel Economy Reform Act, which would have raised fuel economy to 35mpg by 2018. In July he led 21 Freshmen Democrats to ask House Speaker Pelosi to include CAFE standards in the House Energy Bill. After an increase in CAFE standards were left out of the House bill, but included in the Senate bill, Congressman Hall led Freshmen Democrats in sending a letter in November urging Speaker Pelosi to include CAFE standards in the final House-Senate Energy Bill.

Electricity from Clean Renewable Sources

The final Energy Bill contains a Renewable Energy Standard (RES) provision that was included in the House-passed bill that requires 15 percent of U.S. electricity generation to be from renewable sources - such as wind power, biomass, wave, tidal, geothermal and solar - by 2020. It permits utilities to meet up to 4 percent of this target through energy efficiency. A 15 percent Renewable Electricity Standard will reduce global warming emissions and lower energy prices and fossil fuel and natural gas consumption and is endorsed by a broad range of business, manufacturing, utility, environmental, labor, farm, and religious organizations.

Hall is a cosponsor of H.R. 969, legislation that was the basis for the provision included in the Energy Bill. H.R. 969 would have established a 20 percent Renewable Energy Standard by 2020. Hall also voted for House Amendment 748, the amendment which added the RES to the Energy Bill. After the RES was left out of the Senate version of the Energy Bill, Hall spearheaded an effort by Freshmen Democrats who wrote a letter in November to Speaker Pelosi calling on her to fight for the RES to remain in the House-Senate compromise bill.

No New Nuclear Loan Guarantees

Hall was strongly opposed to the \$50 billion in federal subsidies to the nuclear industry that were inserted into the Senate version of the Energy Bill. The nuclear subsidies were removed from the final House-Senate bill.

Earlier this month, Congressman Hall and Congresswoman Shelley Berkley (D-NV01) spearheaded a letter to Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Harry Reid pushing for removal of the expanded taxpayer supports for nuclear power.

The final Energy Bill includes unprecedented support for biofuels, hybrid vehicles, energy efficiency, and research into new energy technologies.

"Last November the American people sent a new majority to Congress with a clear mission to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, fight skyrocketing energy prices, and protect the environment," said Hall. "The landmark legislation the House will pass makes good on that promise and put us on a revolutionary path to energy independence. This momentous shift will bolster our economy and enhance our national security. As a long-time advocate of green energy and environmental protection I am proud to have fought for this bill."